

John Perrot, Early Quaker Schismatic.

by Kenneth L. Carroll. Supplement No. 33 to the Journal of the Friends' Historical Society. London, 1971. 116 pages.

This substantial monograph is a natural by-product of the author's interests in Quaker history in early America, since John Perrot, an Irish Friend, endured dire vicissitudes of his later life in the American colonies, besides his original career in the British Isles and in the trek of Friends towards Italy and the Middle East in the second decade of Quakerism. Like other Friends of the period John Perrot was a deviationist from mainline Quakerism, differing chiefly in minor matters of Friends practice— the best known of his nonconformity to the usual practice being in the small matter of not removing his hat during vocal prayer.

His aberrations followed those of James Nayler and preceded those of Wilkinson and Story. His long imprisonment by the Inquisition of Rome was part of his pride and perhaps of his undoing. For a time many leading Friends accepted his leadership. Kenneth Carroll has made full use of the abundant but difficult printed and manuscript material from Perrot's pen. It permits us to think of him as partly the victim of uncharitable attitudes of some censorious Friends and even of his own understandable independence of thought. His very method of writing rather puts a modern reader off. Though this study of him does not commend his views it was high time that a full dress account should be made available of him, and of the gradual decline of his considerable influence in the American colonies. He died in Jamaica in September, 1665.